The Mystery of Deception

[Part Three]

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Oluwatobi S. Adewuyi
Coordinator

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Topic:
THE MYSTERY OF DECEPTION [PART THREE]
Text: 2 Peter 2:1-22

Prayer
Father, we say thank You this evening for the grace and privilege given to us to be among the living. Lord, we pray that as we begin tonight's study, You will start with us and open our understanding, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Introduction
I welcome you all to today's study in Jesus Christ's name, we'd continue our teaching on the MYSTERY OF DECEPTION now, for the benefit of those who have not read the previous part, please do so before reading this part. God bless you.

Bible Text: 2 Peter 2:1-22
But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. [2] And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. [3] And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. [4] For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; [5] And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; [6] And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; [7] And

delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: [8] (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) [9] The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: [10] But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. [11] Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. [12] But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; [13] And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; [14] Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: [15] Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; [16] But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. [17] These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. [18] For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. [19] While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. [20] For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is

worse with them than the beginning. [21] For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. [22] But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Study

Though they love unrighteousness, and forsake holiness and truthfulness, when the end shall come and they would face the wrath of God, what will they do? Beloved, you can see that the present things you do or believe in may not really have a repercussion now, but what will you do at the end? Because of the things you get from people who do not fear God, you have refused to separate yourself. What will you do when the Lord shall come to judge the secrets of men? Today, unbelievers are focused on the church to ridicule it. The church has now become a talk of the town among the heathens because of the false ministers in the body. No more respect for the church. She has now lost her essence and credibility before the world of sinners, just because of the practices of men who call themselves servants of the living God.

So Peter says, through these people the way of truth will be spoken evil of, and by covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words."And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." **(2 Peter 2:3, KJV).** Looking into these words carefully, we would see that even the believers would be exploited because their shameful ways come through deception. There are many people today that are already being exploited by the spiritual merchandise. Those who merchandise the gospel and see it as a

way to get gain—they achieve this with twisted doctrines and false arguments. One example of the twisted doctrine is cited here: "prosperity gospel. Is it not painful that many have been deceived to believe that there is something called the gospel of prosperity, which the Lord approves, and do not see anything wrong in it? These are the set of people Peter is talking about—that they exploit people through covetousness. When talking about the gospel of prosperity, we would be talking about the gospel of Mammon. Please follow carefully. We are talking about the mystery of deception, in which the prosperity gospel is one, which is also called Word of Faith theology.

This kind of gospel is one that teaches that God wants believers to be wealthy and successful, and that faith, positive speech, and generous giving—especially to Christian ministries—will result in material and physical blessings. If we look at all this carefully, we would see that it looks good and harmless. But this doctrine lies in deception, in the sense that it makes it look as if all what God is concerned about is our physical well-being. It does not place emphasis on the spiritual lives of people. Therefore, the focus is on self. It emphasizes personal gain over spiritual growth, holiness, or service.

That gospel takes away the place of suffering, as it downplays or denies the biblical reality of trials and suffering in the Christian life. Whereas, if we look into the scriptures carefully, we would see that Christians are meant to face suffering in one way or the other. This gospel makes it look like when a Christian suffers, it means God has forsaken such. This gospel exploits the poor, promising them wealth in exchange for donations. So, they say give 10,000 Naira and the Lord will bless you with 100,000 Naira. Turning God to Ponzi sites, they would tell you to sow a seed or make a vow of a particular amount that God will bless you in return. While it is true that God blesses His people with material

things, they are not the ultimate goal of Christian life. **Deuteronomy 8:18 —** "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."They preach that God gives wealth, but forget the aspect that says men should remember the Lord. Truly, the blessing of the Lord brings wealth, but giving under compulsion or out of pleasure is not a criterion to receiving it. **Proverbs 10:22 —** "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."This strange gospel makes men to seek for material prosperity and not spiritual prosperity, against the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Matthew 6:33** — "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The first thing God seeks for in your life is the prosperity of your soul, not that of your body or materialism. God wants all to go well with you, both physically and spiritually, but He places your spiritual well-being above your physical. Besides, when you are spiritually well, all other things will fall in place. **3 John 1:2 —** "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."Not that wealth is evil. Money is not bad, but making it an idol is evil before the Lord. And this is what these false ministers have done.

1 Timothy 6:9–10 — "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."This is why we must be careful of this merchandise in the house of God. Some are not operating a church, but a business company in the name of Christ. Whereas Jesus Christ says, **Matthew 6:24** — "No man can serve two

masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."You will pick one. And prosperity preachers refuse to pick one publicly, but have picked Mammon spiritually, secretly. This is why, if you attend any church that claims God calls to preach the gospel of prosperity, you are under a false teacher.

What the Bible teaches about prosperity is that:

1. Trusting God in both abundance and lack is necessary.

2. You should use wealth to glorify God and serve others.

3. It is to prioritize spiritual health over material gain.

4. To be content in every circumstance. **Philippians 4:11** – "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

5. It is to focus on the Kingdom of God, as material things of this world would be added. **Matthew 6:33 –** "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

6. It is to bring more emphasis on the prosperity of the soul and the eternal destination of the soul than the present things of this world. **3 John 1:2 –** "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

7. The Lord is not pleased with the gospel of Mammon, hence He pronounced judgment on those who do so right from the time of old. **Matthew 6:24** – "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

8. Peter says God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed. **2 Peter 2:3 –** "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

9. This means their end point is destruction, like those during the days of Jeremiah. **Jeremiah 5:30–31** – "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

10. You should not follow their ways, so that you will not be destroyed along with them. **2 Peter 2:4–7 –** "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked."

In the beginning, when the angels joined Lucifer to sin against God, He did not spare them, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment. Therefore, how much more those who would not obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, but would make merchandise of it! Peter decided to remind us of what happened in heaven and the days of Noah and Lot, how God judged the ungodly and saved the righteous men. God spared Noah, a preacher of righteousness, not a preacher of prosperity. If we read carefully,

we can see that if only these men that were saved were righteous—Lot and Noah—and they could not withstand the ungodly lifestyle of those in their days, it means those who preached and lived their lives outside righteousness were regarded as part of the ungodly, and they were destroyed. Therefore, God destroyed them, making them an example to those that would live ungodly lives. **2 Peter 2:6 – "**And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." This means that Peter is referring to us in this generation—that an example of God's destruction was seen in the time of old, and similarly it will happen today.

And those who would live ungodly lives, either by preaching deceptive messages or by following these derailing messages that are a far away from true righteousness, would certainly face the same fate with those of old, like Sodom and Gomorrah. But for the preachers of righteousness and followers of righteousness, the Lord knows how to deliver them from temptation. **2 Peter 2:9 –** "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

It is certain that the ungodly, though they may be prospering according to the standard of worldly assessment, yet they are reserved for judgment. Then he tells us furthermore about those that would experience similar fate**. 2 Peter 2:10 –** "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

Let's stop here for today, and continue next time.

Invitation

If you know that you are still living in sin and you are ready to repent and begin to live your life in strict obedience to God so that you can overcome every sin in your life to make heaven, please place your right hand on your chest and say this prayer with your mouth.

Say,

"Lord Jesus, I accept You as my personal Lord and Savior. I believe that You died for me and took away my sins so that I will not face the penalty of them. I surrender my life to You today, and I make a decision to obey and follow You. Come into my life now and accept me as Your child. Thank You for saving me, in Jesus Christ's name I pray, Amen."

Congratulations, now you are saved. If you prayed this short prayer, please WhatsApp **+2347067511039** and let me know that you have just been saved. I want to have a word with you. God bless you!

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